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**A M E S,** By the Grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France, & Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. To all and singuler Archbishops, Bishops, Archdeacons, Deanes, and their Officers: Parsons, Vicars, Curats, and to all spirituall persons: And also to al Justices of Peace, Shrieffes, Bayliffes, Constables, Churchwardens, & Headboroughes: And to all Officers of Citties, Boroughes, and Townes corporate: And to all other our Officers, Ministers, and Subjects whatsoeuer they bee, aswell within Liberties, as without, to whom these presents shall come, greeting.

WE Y C R E A S we are credibly certified by a Certificate under the hands of our trusty and welbeloued Subjects Sir Fulke Grevill Knight, Chancellor of our Exchequer, Sir Thomas Leigh, Sir Edward Devereux, and Sir Thomas Holt Knights & Baronets, Sir Edward Greuill, Sir Clement Fisher, Sir Clement Throgmorton, Sir Richard Verney, Sir Thomas Lucy, Sir Henry Dymocke, Sir William Somerull, Sir Thomas Beaufon, and Sir Henry Rainsford Knights, Thomas Spencer, Edward Boughton, Bartholomew Hales, John Repington, William Combe, and William Barnes Esquierrs, Justices of the Peace within our Countys of Warwicke & Gloucester: That upon Saterday the Pynth day of July in the yeare of our Lord God, One Thousand Five Hundred and Fiftene, theris happened a sodaine and terrible fire within our Towne of Stratford vpon Avon within our County of Warwicke, which within the space of lesse then two houres consumed & burnt fifty & fower dwelling houses, many of them being very faire houses, besides Barnes, Stables, & other howses of Office, together also with great store of Corne, Hay, Straw, Wood, & Timber therin, Amounting in all to the value of Eight Thousand Pounds & vpwards. The force of which fire was so great (the wind sitting ful vpon the Towne) that it dispersed into so many places thereof, whereby the whole Towne was in very great danger to haue bene vterly consumed and burnt; by reason whereof, and of two severall fires happening in the said Towne within these Twenty yeares, to the losse of Twenty Thousand Pounds more, not onely our said poore Subjects who haue now sustained this great losse, are vterly vndone and like to perish, but also the rest of the Towne is in great hazard to be ouerthowne & vndone, the Inhabitants there being no waies able to reliefe their distressed neigbors in this their great want & misery. A P D wheras the said Towne hath been a great Market Towne wherunto great recourse of people was made, by reason of the wakely Market, Faires, and other frequent meetings, which were there holden and appointed, and now being thus ruined & decayed, it is in greate hazard to bee vterly ouerthowne, if either the resort thither be neglected, or course of trauellers diverted, which so, want of spedie reparacion may bee occasioned. And soasmuch as our sayd distressed Subjects the Inhabitants of the said Towne are very ready & willing to the vttermost of their powers to redifie & new build the say Towne againe, Yet finding the performance therof far beyond their abillty, they haue made their humble suite vnto vs, that we would be pleased to provide some conuenient meanes that the said Towne may be againe redified & repayed aswell for the relieve of the distressed people within the same, as also for the restoring and continuing of the sayd Market, and haue humbly besought vs to command the same god & laudable ded and the charitable furtherance thereof, to the beneuolence of all our louing Subjects, not doubting but that all god and wel disposed Christians will for common charity and loue to their Country, and the rather for our Commendation herof, be ready with all willingnes to extend their charitable reliese towards the comfort of so many distressed people, and the spedie performing of so god and charitable a wo:ke.

B P D W E yee therefore, that wee (tendering the lamentable estate and losses of our sayd distressed Inhabitants, together with the humble suit of all our foresaide Justices made vnto vs on their behalfe) Of our especiall Grace and Princely compassion, haue giuen & granted, and by these our Letters Patents doe give and graunt vnto our foresaide trusty & welbeloued Subjects, Sir Richard Verney, Sir Henry Rainsford Knights, Bartholomew Hales Esquier, and the Bayliffe & Burgesses of the sayd Towne of Stratford vpon Avon, and to their Deputie & Deputies, the bearer or bearers hereof, full power, licence and authority, to aske, gather, receive, & take the Almes & charitable beneuolence of all our louing Subjects whatsoeuer Inhabiting within our Countys of Yorke, Lancastcr, and the County Palatine & Bishopricke of Durham, Chelten, Denbigh, Flint, Monsgomery, Pembroke, Brecknock, Monmouth, and Hereford, with our Citties of Yorke, Chelten, & Hereford, with our Towne and County of Kingston vpon Hull: And in all other Cities, Townes Corporate, privalledged places, Parishes, Villages, and in all other places whatsoeuer within our said Countys, and not else where, for & towards the new building, redifying and erecting of the said Towne of Stratford vpon Avon, & the relieving of al such our poore distressed Subjects, their Wives & Children, as haue sustained losse & decay by the misfortune of the said fire.

WE Y C R E F D R E wee wil & command you, and every of you, that at such time and times as the sayd Sir Richard Verney, Sir Henry Rainsford, Bartholomew Hales, the Bayliffe & Burgesses aforesaid or any of them, or their Deputie or Deputies, the bearer or bearers hereof, shall come & repaire to any your Churches, Chappels, or other places, to aske, and receive the gratuities & charitable beneuolence of our said Subjects, quietly to permit & suffer them so to do, without any manner your lets, or contradiccons. And you the said Parsons, Vicars, and Curats, for the better stirring vp of a charitable deuotion, deliberately to publish and declare the Tenor of these our Letters Patents vnto our said Subjects, Exhorting and perswading them to extend their liberal contributions in so god & charitable a dede. And you the Churchwardens of every Parish where such Collection is to bee made (as aforesaid) to collect and gather the Almes and charitable beneuolence of all our louing Subjects, And what shall bee by you so gathered, to endorse on the Backe side hereof, and deliver the same to the bearer or bearers hereof, when as therewnto you shall be required. As ny Statute, Lawe, Ordinance, or prouision heretofore made to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding.

I P witness wherof, wee haue caused these our Letters to be made Patents for the space of One whole yeare next after the date hereof to endure. Witnessse our selfe at Westminster the Cleauenth day of May, in the Fourteenth yere of our Raigne of England, Fraunce, and Ireland; and of Scotland, the fyne and fourtie.

Steward

God saue the King.

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